

SENATE BILL REPORT

SJM 8011

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
State & Local Government, February 12, 2001

Brief Description: Asking that the federal government provide veterans' benefits owed to Filipino veterans.

Sponsors: Senators Prentice, Finkbeiner, T. Sheldon, Shin, Regala, Costa, Kline, Thibaudeau, Patterson, Jacobsen, Snyder, Carlson, Constantine, Kastama, Hargrove, Benton, Haugen, Hochstatter, Rasmussen, Kohl-Welles, Oke, Johnson, McAuliffe, McDonald, Honeyford, Gardner and Winsley.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State & Local Government: 2/12/01 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Patterson, Chair; Fairley, Vice Chair; Gardner, Hale, Haugen, Horn, Kline, McCaslin, Roach, T. Sheldon and Swecker.

Staff: Eugene Green (786-7405)

Background: On July 26, 1941, President F. D. Roosevelt issued a Military Order to "call and order into the service of the Armed Forces of the United States ... all of the organized military forces of the government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines." In 1946, the U.S. Congress passed the Rescission Act, denying U.S. military status and benefits to those Filipino veterans who fought under the command of officers of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Philippines. Filipinos are the only national group singled out for denial of full U.S. veterans status.

Summary of Bill: Congress is asked to amend the 1946 Rescission Act and honor our country's moral obligation to restore to the Filipinos full United States veterans status with the military benefits that these veterans deserve.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Testimony For: The Filipino veterans, in action alongside U.S. troops, were captured and some were never heard from. The Filipino troops were captives on the Bataan Death March. These veterans are dying out -- 20 per week here and in the Philippines. General Douglas MacArthur said we were both brave and valiant. Please help us right this injustice.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Miebeth R. Bustillo-Hutchins, Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs; Bert Caoili, Percy Credo, FIL community member; Julio Joaquin, Filipino War Veterans of Washington; Camilo De Guzman, Filipino community; Amador M. Monter, World War II veteran; Manuel Divina, Filipino American Political Action Group of Washington.